

ORDER OF HEALTH OFFICER
10-2020

WHEREAS, the World Health Organization has declared the worldwide outbreak of Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) a pandemic;

WHEREAS, as of July 7, 2020, the John Hopkins Map indicates there are over 2.9 million cases of COVID-19 and over 130,000 deaths in the United States;

WHEREAS, every state in the United States is experiencing confirmed cases of COVID-19;

WHEREAS, the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) recognizes COVID-19 as a threat to the residents of Montana;

WHEREAS, there are 1,249 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the State of Montana and 39 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Lewis and Clark County;

WHEREAS, the Lewis and Clark Public Health Command has activated response plans and protocols to prepare for cases of COVID-19 in Lewis and Clark County;

WHEREAS, the Lewis and Clark Public Health Command has worked in coordination with the State of Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services and the CDC to identify, contact, and test individuals in Lewis and Clark County who have been potentially exposed to COVID-19;

WHEREAS, COVID-19 is a respiratory disease that can result in serious illness or death and is a new strain of Coronavirus that had not been previously identified in humans and can easily spread from person-to-person;

WHEREAS, the CDC identifies the potential public health threat posed by COVID-19 both globally and in the United States as "high" and has advised that person-to-person spread of the COVID-19 will continue to occur globally, including within the United States, Montana, and Lewis and Clark County;

WHEREAS, slowing the spread of COVID-19 locally relies on Lewis and Clark Public Health's ability to contain disease

through case isolation, contact tracing, and quarantine of close contacts to cases;

WHEREAS, evidence shows that large gatherings and events often facilitate the rapid spread of COVID-19 resulting in a local outbreak;

WHEREAS, large gatherings of over 250 persons in Lewis and Clark County may spread COVID-19 to such an extent that Lewis and Clark Public Health's ability to perform case isolation, contact tracing, and quarantine of close contacts to cases is overwhelmed;

WHEREAS, proactively implementing mitigation measures to slow the spread of the virus and prevent an outbreak is in the best interests of Lewis and Clark and its people;

WHEREAS, the circumstances of an outbreak may exceed the capacity of the services, personnel, equipment, supplies and facilities of Lewis and Clark County;

WHEREAS, based upon all of the above, the Governor of the State of Montana, in consultation with public health authorities, has directed non-essential social and recreational gatherings of individuals outside of a home or place of residence of greater than fifty (50) people not advisable, if a distance of at least six (6) feet between individuals cannot be maintained. **Events with groups larger than 50 people should be cancelled unless physical distancing can be maintained.**

WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention outlines considerations for events and gatherings as such:

- **Lowest risk:** Virtual-only activities, events, and gatherings.
- **More risk:** Smaller outdoor and in-person gatherings in which individuals from different households remain spaced at least 6 feet apart, wear cloth face coverings, do not share objects, and come from the same local area (e.g., community, town, city, or county).
- **Higher risk:** Medium-sized in-person gatherings that are adapted to allow individuals to remain spaced at

least 6 feet apart and with attendees coming from outside the local area.

- **Highest risk:** Large in-person gatherings where it is difficult for individuals to remain spaced at least 6 feet apart and attendees travel from outside the local area.

WHEREAS, the City-County of Lewis and Clark Board of Health has the duty to protect the public from the introduction and spread of communicable disease or other conditions of public health importance, including through actions to ensure the removal of filth or other contaminants that might cause disease or adversely affect public health;

WHEREAS, the City-County of Lewis and Clark Board of Health has determined that the potential spread of COVID-19 constitutes a public health emergency and actions must be taken to avert and minimize the outbreak of this communicable disease and;

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 50-2-118 of the Montana Code Annotated, a local health officer in carrying out the purpose of the public health system shall take steps to limit contact between people in order to protect the public health from imminent threats, including but not limited to ordering the closure of buildings or facilities where people congregate and cancelling events;

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED, pursuant to Title 50, Chapter 2, Part 1, and specifically Section 50-2-118 of the Montana Code Annotated,

the Lewis and Clark City-County Health Officer, in conjunction with the Lewis and Clark City-County Board of Health, hereby orders **events and gatherings limited to no more than 250 people**, and events and gatherings between 50 and 249 people must adhere to the following:

- Submit on the form provided by Lewis and Clark Public Health to Lewis and Clark Public Health a detailed plan outlining protective measures and environmental controls to reduce the risk of disease transmission at least ten (10) days prior to event or gathering.
- Maintain strict physical distancing of 6 feet between individuals or between groups of family members.

- Follow guidance provided by Lewis and Clark Public Health regarding event planning and ensure plan is adhered to at the time of the event or gathering.

Enforcement:

This order will be enforced through a complaint driven process where law enforcement will observe and document violations of this order and provide report to Lewis and Clark County Attorney for enforcement against the event or gathering organizer and attendees. Event or gathering organizers may face a misdemeanor charge under MCA 50-2-124 for each attendee at the event or gathering.

This Directive and Order shall be effective July 8, 2020, at 12:00am through December 31, 2020 at 11:59pm, pending further notification.



Drenda Niemann

HEALTH OFFICER FOR CITY-COUNTY OF Lewis and Clark, MONTANA